

FIVE SEASONS

POEMS

STEVEN FRATTALI

THE BANYAN PRESS

of

TAIPEI

2010

FIVE SEASONS © Copyright 2010 by Steven Frattali.

"Afterword: Encounters with the Author in Taipei and
Environs" @ Copyright 2011
by The Banyan Press of Taipei.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or
reproduced in any manner without written permission
except in the case of brief quotations within critical articles
or reviews. For information please address The Banyan
Press of Taipei, 101 Song Ling Rd., Hsinchu, Taiwan, ROC
300. Email: thebanyanpress@gmail.com

Along the Surface

Enigma of ripeness: now the earth itself
Discloses, wonderfully, a second skin,
Residual life so thinly scattered, here
And there, along the surface of the world.

The leaves have fallen and the trees are bare,
The corn and barley shorn from the fields.
At evening, all the voices of the sun
Are gathered in a cone whose apex lies

So far beyond the earth's burnt, jagged edge
That only rustling echoes are left here,
And cold, stiff grass, and night's new silences.

The dirt is black but dry. And when I turn,
I see my footprints wrinkling the earth,
Whose deeper life is still not yet disclosed.

Anima

The substance of the earth is life itself
Dissolved in streams and trafficked into roots,
Conducted through the fibers of the trees
To circulate in branch and stem and leaf,

To act and mingle in the light and air,
Once more returned to that ancestral realm,
To powers of powers and the principle
Of time burning and yet actively at rest.

Then it is fallen to the ground in leaves,
In branches broken by wild autumn storms.
Foxfire, rotting, it is with all these.

And rain comes taking everything back down
Through complex earth, the infinite networks,
And life returns into itself again.

Another Afternoon

The sun is bright, and dusty, through the leaves.
Along their edge the edge of sunlight burns,
Corroding them against the glare of day;
Cracked charcoal shadows vein a pewter sand.

I sit beneath, watching the afternoon:
The air is still but for the slightest breeze
That sifts among the field's tall dry grass
And just confirms the stillness and the heat.

What do I feel now as I sit beneath
The crooked punished tree, the shaded sun?
A warmth, the memory of light on skin,

Something conferred and, for all that, denied.
And deep in the bluest distance of the sky
No hint of rain, no break for the long drought.

April Night

Disquiet of April. New grass fills the night
With scent of damp earth and of chill spring life.
A scent so deep and subtly disturbing
A stream of days comes flooding back to me.

Ancient and new roots now stir together
In the archaic life of memory;
The burning bush of time once burnt to ash
Now reaches upward, branching through the night.

I walk among the windy tree-top stars --
The cold clear sky! -- going not on a street
But on the surface of the darkened earth.

Here who has known me? Seen me? Heard my
voice?

Earth cold and silent, visited, unknown,
Opening before me, closing up behind.

Another Invocation

O you about the moving branches and
Part of that resonant and shifting light
Amid the dark green laurel-colored leaves
Of plum, moving and turning in the light,

Moving and turning in my thought, almost
A thought yourself, I sit here in the shade
And play with the enigma of that light
And of your brief and yet persuasive beauty.

The branches hang above me and just move
In breeze that sways them slightly as I watch,
The shadows move upon me in my thought.

With figures of the leaves across my face
I turn to you. Desire is just thought,
And can't concede it to the moment past.

Approach

I lay in the plum tree's shade that afternoon,
Looking up through the branches where the sun
Shone down, filtering through cracks of leaves.
The day was warm and quiet, just a faint breeze.

And after I had watched a while, the light
A glistening white oil through black paper,
I turned and stretched myself out on the grass
And closed my eyes, just being, listening....

It was as though I felt a rising wave
Falling and rising, breathing, like a swell
In the sea's calm; I floated there, adrift,

And in the waiting silence of the afternoon
Went deeper than the groundswell's systole
To touch its darkest, somnolent, still center.

August

You ask me where I'm off to -- just right here,
Just down the path I took you through before
When summer made the pea vines hum with bees
And the flowers of the beans burned in the sun.

You might say, different time so different place,
For one can't ever see the same spot twice,
Touch the same leaf or stem, the flower's scent,
Though just one hour pass, isn't the same.

You might say, but you won't. You'll come along
Instead and be content with just pretense,
Smiling and pleased to pick that one pea blossom,

Thinking so many things. And there's so much.
How well the garden does. Although this week
Has been a little hot and somewhat dry.

Beauty and Sadness

It's mid-October and the burning leaves
Flutter and flake down from the sunlit tree.
October sunlight, the radiant bright crown,
The aura and gold of life that is mere light.

Light has grown softer, yet it is richer too.
Who could describe the autumn? Still and blue,
Bearing a light so desolate and pure
And twinkling on the surface of the pond.

Beauty and sadness touch each falling leaf;
The pond is filled with yellow leaves and gold,
Rose madder leaves and dark rust-eaten leaves.

Mystery of ripeness and enigma
Of the silent noon are bared and opening
And lead beyond the surface of the earth.

Beyond

Blue evening light: low hummocks of raked leaves
Mark off the orchards, yards, and garden plots
Like ancient burial mounds, like serpent rows
Of hills, like bodies covered up in leaves.

The slowly turning funnels of grey smoke,
Leaking and streaming from the mounds and banks
Of burning grass, begrime the chilly air,
Their sweet and acrid smell like frankincense.

Our evening footsteps lead us toward the hill
Where sunlight bleeds beyond the brambly trees,
A burning dwindling presence past the wall

Of dark trees and of burning fallen leaves.
The sun's face must be hidden in the earth,
Yet leaf on leaf, like pages, covers it.

After Bonnard

Her form amid the radiant penumbra --
Gold water and gold tiles and gold light.
Time is the faintest whisper in her mind,
Less than the sound of water, than each small splash.

Rather it's something known by its absence,
And so not even thought, obscurely known.
Time is not permeating warmth of water felt
Through every part of her and trace of self

Dissolving in the bath of golden light,
Time is what isn't present, what's not felt,
Archaic syllable of no import

In this basilica where life is light,
Where flesh is clarity, and being poised
Upon a moment time cannot dissolve.

Cathedral

Unheard-of silences are echoing
Through evening's cold air toward the cobalt sky.
Higher and higher, silence gathers us
Into the opening realm of failing light.

My feet just touch the black dirt where I stand.
The path is lost amid the trees that hold
The blue of ebb-light, and the yellow-green
Of sunset, past their black and tangled boughs.

Sometimes I need to touch the earth, although
I never can, I hover over it.
Sometimes I need to touch the tree's rough bark.

The wood is gathering itself around
The traces of my steps. My shadow, too,
Is lost, my voice falls silent in the air.

Coverings

The eye is opening, the eye a wound,
The open wound ripped wider by the day,
The burning syllables of light that speak
Their word -- a dagger in the open flesh

Of which the mask that cauls the face is made,
Chaos the word of morning uttered now,
This outcry of the light upon the wall,
This kindling of images, desire....

The garden sifts and searches through itself
As wind moves lightly over it; the leaves
Are tongues about to speak, the stems are dry.

The soil is the merest film of earth.
We hold to it, yet we are like the leaves
That, dried and curled, now scratch along the street.

Darkened Sun

Darkened sun beyond the world's far rim,
Only a twilit silence left to us.
Cold wind across the dim and grey pasture,
The tossing branches of the maple tree.

Beyond the earth-rim's jagged edge,
Now black with ramifying portents,
The shapes and figures of concluding days
That lie before me, far beneath my foot.

The earth is turning slowly, and so fast,
And I can feel the opening of night.
The stars are scattered out across the sky.

There's only a faint outline in the west.
The field is gone, the path invisible.
Where shall I go now? Who will look for me?

Departure

Now out the kitchen window the back yard
Is dimly white beneath new-fallen snow.
The lines fall slowly, silently, and turn
The empty branches of the plum tree white.

I watch as heavy flakes fall down and down.
Is it just snow that falls? And yet the earth
Itself is falling silently through time.
Tomorrow night whose foot prints will I find?

Who is it moving through the yard? No one,
His step light on the Galilee of snow,
Leaving no foot prints, guessed-at yet unseen.

No one is coming. Open the doors wide!
Let in the gusts of starry cold night air.
Then, without waiting further, I can leave.

Digging the Garden

The earth, they say, is dark and secretive.
Open the ground and see what you find there --
Black grains of soil, black filaments of roots.
The reek of mellow ground comes up to you.

The spade turns up night crawlers to the sun
Or sometimes a large stone which stops the blade
Until you scoop it around and work it loose.
Or you'll come upon some old discarded thing --

A bottle cap, a spoon, a plastic toy.
You'll never find what you might care to find.
And yet small revelations. The weight

Of earth is learned one spadeful at a time.
The drift of it is constant – not just down,
But to the bottom of the deepest well.

Search

Mysterious ripeness merely many leaves
Falling and falling to the covered earth
Now lying partly sheltered from our steps;
Smoke of autumn fires fills the air,

Grey smoke of burnt-out evening, drifting through
The silent fields. The sky's deep noble blue
Where now the first stars shine, and up ahead
The trees are black along the world's burnt rim.

The earth is hidden from us, ashen leaves
Are dark and rustle softly under foot,
Their branches, seen against the evening sky,

Are charred and burning still. Earth is not all.
Slowly, how very slowly now, the thought
Of this comes home to us who linger here.

Dark

You had forgotten we were supposed to meet
Here in the complicated shade -- oak leaves
And dogwood branches, and where the juniper
And honeysuckle blend their two shadows.

The dark and sweet involvements of the flower:
No flower like this honeysuckle vine.
It must be breathed in deeply, slowly; then
One gives one's being wholly to its scent.

The fragrant and soft petals on your face
Will make you know the dark, as it should be,
As you will have to know all it implies,

Bearing the changes then that come over you,
Deeper than shadow, yet not more than breath,
A final darkness before awakening.

Intersection

I let the night's points drift along my hand
As I lay in the deep grass, drifting out
Myself among the shapes of stars and clouds
Of vision in the time of night and sleep.

In this way realms are mingled in the night
Which brings the time of intersections when
Strange with pregnant being, and the world of light
Now put aside, deep presence congregates.

The world becomes empowered and possessed
And is a primitive and perfect realm,
A realm of many realms, unpredictable,

Which intersect at points, at times, by chance
Or by obscure conjunctions echoing
In memory which attempts to comprehend.

Early Summer Night

I open the back porch window. The night air
Spills in with its cool dampness, with the scent
Of elderberry and the mid-June grass.
For that one instant night is just perfume

Diffused in darkness, while the stars drift off
Sparkling coldly through the maple's leaves,
And for the moment I can't quite recall
Which is the near side of the window -- night

Has taken hold, as inside presses toward
The dark realm which so silently has flowed
In through the screen I push my nose against.

Its cold metallic veil against my lips
Deadens things a moment, though the stars
Still drift, and cool breeze still stirs through the
leaves.

Echo

The fallen sun beyond the world's dark hills,
Hills shriveled like burnt paper -- folded, charred;
The fallen sun beyond the burnt-off edge
Where ember light is dying beneath its ash.

And stars are blown sparks scattered from the sheet
Of burning paper that the earth is now,
A paper burning, crumbling to bits
Of ash -- no more the legends of the world.

No longer to be seen or to be read,
The earth is no more something for the eye,
The sun's place empty, open to the night.

Instead of sun there's just the central sound
Echoing, profound and widest silence,
Freed from the shape or shadow of all words.

Eclipse

The leaves fall with the autumn, darkness comes.
What can we do as winter comes nearer to us?
The eye of earth is closing on our steps,
Closing beneath its lid, the soil's shell

We walk upon and crack and dent and craze.
The shatters web the world they break apart,
Not like the brown leaf's capillary web
Held up to catch the light, the flow of light,

The feeling fiber-optics of the leaf
That streams with sunlight, water, earth and air --
Not seeing, searching; and not sought-for, found.

Smoke of the autumn fires in the air.
At twilight gardeners rake the garden plots,
Making their piles of dead stuff to burn.

The Edge of the Road

The trees are cinders twisted in the red
Light of the sunset. Blackened hills far off.
Stars mapped and named along the winter sky
Draw our gaze up and yet we feel the earth,

Now hard and frozen, underneath our feet.
Your breath goes up like smoke, your face is cold.
Half frozen now, your fingers and toes ache.
You never drop your gaze from the night's stars.

Headlights coming toward you on the road,
The pine wood as you pass; the maze of trees.
Dark, confused paths on the frozen earth.

A shadow in the dark, you can't be seen
Moving at road's edge, watching the starred sky.
Your eyes so wide to take in the whole night.

Ending

In autumn when the leaves are gone, the earth
Is laid bare, naked of all covering:
These are the trees, and yet are not the trees,
These are the fields, and yet are not the fields.

The evening closes with its cobalt sky.
The sky is not the sky -- the empty space
Is brimming with the end of fallen light.
Stars are remnants; the earth is going cold,

Has fallen still -- stiller and stiller now;
The wind, so quiet now, is so alone,
And footsteps echoing in darkened streets

Have hushed the last speech just before it came.
The crumbled earthly fields are black; dusk-ash.
Another world is waiting for our steps.

February Evening

Late winter evening. Smoke-and-graphite clouds
And freezing rain. Melted refrozen snow.
The violet dusk air just turned to night.
The four walls drove me out to walk the streets.

Drizzling rain freezing to a skin of ice
Around black glycerin-coated branches.
A street light just above a higher limb
Is sepia and amber and looks submerged.

A steady aerosol of slanting rain
Is falling falling falling past the light.
Slush in the street looks like congealed wax

That pools around a wick. The blue-black street
Is shiny, glistening where the snow is gone.
Boots are soaked through. My toes sting with cold
wet.

There Are Figures

Accepting the illusions given, lent
To us by worlds which yet withhold themselves,
Rejecting what they give too willingly
We look down through the tunnel of night trees,

The leaves of late spring, wild, many-shadowed,
thick,
Matte black, shaking in the moonlit breeze,
Are cracked and veined and maculate with light,
A shadow-body, tormented and fitful,

Shivering and flowing on stone-colored dust,
Across the sidewalk's tilted cracking face,
Blown light-networks in the gusts of wind,

Distended, flexing suddenly, blinked shut,
Then opened, snapped back in the counter-breeze
Blowing through the open spaces of the night.

From Here

These crumbs of dirt I hold here in my hand --
Grains of soil and seeds to be planted too,
Like seeds of the spotted bean or wrinkled pea.
Planting, I plant the earth, too, in the earth.

Soul grains as well. The spirit must be held.
Light-clamor for waking eyes, choruses, tongue
Twining with tongue, and opening voices wake --
Wrapping constricting vine and burning flower.

Whisper of growth, yet what is coming? How?
The hidden bares itself in the low and near,
Flowers its promise from each moment's bud --

The moment holds yet vanishes. Now hold
To the opening crumble of the soil
Through which the ghostly earth rises to earth.

Fullness

In slowness stem by stem and leaf by leaf,
Beneath the August sun that brings each forth,
Each thing attains itself: the plum its juice,
Tomatoes roundure, flower their petals, all.

Each is made part of what the garden is.
And the tangled deep involvement of their growth
Resolves first to the order in each one
And then into this single complex thing.

It bears an inner knowledge of itself,
The garden in the silent heat of noon,
And gradually made denser in its growth

By slow concretion of its minute points
Of fibrous inward energy and strength
Attains its intricate fullness now in the late sun.

Garden Path

The path leads down between the tall bean vines,
All dripping rain which just this morning fell;
One breathes the scent of summer's earth, the mingled
Essences of day, of water, earth, and air.

And if you listen carefully you hear
The water droplet dripping from its leaf
To strike the leaf below, a tapping sound,
A sound announcing present time, right now.

And in that perfect time you'll know the word,
Compounded of the scent of earth and rain,
Of standing in the garden being breath

Now taken in response to breath, enlarged,
Empowered, deepened, fulfillment of the sense
Of essences breathed in, of powers found.

Going

Inside the furnace of the fallen sun
The blackened letters of the world are burnt,
The crumpled char of hills fed to its mouth.
The tarnishing and molten stuff of clouds

Flows like a ship's wake, foam of the bright green
sky.

The earth is darkening from east to west,
The sky, so filled with gold and opal clouds,
Is swept away far to the end of days.

Slowly, silent, the furnace door is sealed.
A horizontal line amid grey smoke.
Above, and all around, sparks linger in the sky.

Now birds, in the stilling absence of the sun,
Embellishing the silence of near night.
Now wind in the aftermath. Now the uninhabited
earth.

The Grape Arbor

Sun fragments filter through the broad green leaves
And remnants glow among cracks of the dirt floor.
The table where I sit shows spots of light
And marble-veins of light that waver, brighten,

Veer and scatter to blink shut when wind
Blows through the overhanging tangled mass
Of twilight shadows and the green sun-snake
That, ramifying, broods upon me here.

The pulse of mind is held a prisoner,
Like sight held captive in the throbbing eye
And struggling in the capillaries' web.

And breath itself is trapped with bars of ribs
Except where it escapes at nose or mouth.
Yet where can the captive eye find its release?

The Grass

Midsummer grass is high, waving, still green.
And the pulsing luminous sun burns on.
The heat is turning grass to hay right now,
You almost feel the parching, it's so hot.

Tall grass that the wind ripples through at noon
And which soaks up the light -- I lay beneath
And listened there. What sound did the day make?
My hand searched through the thickest strands and
weeds.

And down close to the soil I seemed to feel
A steady warmth... archaic scent of earth,
I knew its recessed being, breathed its life.

The heat of the long summer, the bright sun,
Flowed through the grass, each blade a laughing
tongue.
Then all fell silent, stricken with the light.

Heat

I walked the ten miles here this afternoon,
The dust that's on my shoes is from the road
Where shards of gravel glittered in the sun
And hot light struck the melting asphalt strip.

A watery heat shimmer like gas fumes
Was all I knew ahead, and all behind.
I walked between two open furnaces
As though from fire to frying pan to fire.

At times my shoes stuck to the melting road.
I pulled them loose, and when I did it left
A toffee-pull of tar like chewing gum.

In the middle of the drought, when nothing grows,
I walked beneath bright glories -- bright dust
Like metal shavings, all so hot and still.

Hot and Bright

What is this simple substance, the summer's heat?
Bright being of sunlight and heat of day,
The medium in which we live and move --
The light shines warm upon my outstretched hand.

Resigned to live the processes of earth --
The burning floor of time, its lacks and flaws --
I nonetheless seek out its principles,
Lying here in shade, light-riddled leaves

Above me and their partial shade around.
You move through the warm currents of midday
And feel yourself a part of what is here.

And yet what is? Stray shards of thought offered --
Bright blears and streaks, gold filaments fallen
As I think to grasp, to hold...and think once more.

Hot Day

The sun this afternoon, so bright and hot,
Warms the stagnant odors of the field,
Stirs them just slightly -- the scents of earth and grass,
The odors of day, the essences of day.

The field is stifling, still, at this hot hour.
The air so bright seems full of presences,
Half dreaming sunlight of the afternoon.
Slowly it gets hotter, deepening

The constant hum; the watery heat-blur,
Shimmering, quivers on the far-off strip
From which I've turned to walk in waist-high grass.

The air though still is audibly astir
With flies and gnats, cicadas, honeybees --
Time burning in the simmer of the day.

If Light Creates the Most Intense Desire

If light creates the most intense desire --
The gold yet warm reflected radiance
Bonnard dreamed for his woman endlessly
Afloat that tranced and weightless moment,

The waters of desire turned to light --
What happens then with darkness? What does it
bring?

Night falls across the chapel of glass tiles,
The bright form darkens and then disappears.

The bright form turns to canvas in the hand.
Desire takes up its mere implements,
And later ink will dry on the white page.

Her form that moves like Danae to the light,
A room entirely washed in radiance,
Vision breaks, like waves, into the world.

The Image

The sun is warm and the air is quiet, still,
So, murmuring, the bees will never cease
Or seem not to: some single constant sound
Just present in the day, a hum or less,

Some echo, some activity, something --
Felt in this quality of warmth and light
That like the bees will also never cease.
The noon heat echoes and compounds itself.

I've sat here for an hour, maybe two.
There isn't anything I want, just this
Receptive quiet echoing within

The sense of light and warmth upon my skin
And in my mind, in that eye there and that body,
The scent of earth, though present, nearly gone.

In the Grass

This noon beneath the shadows of the leaves
That wavered in the sun and the warm wind
I watched a single point there in the grass,
My face close to the ground, touched by the grass:

A scrutiny beyond the light of noon
Where daylight never comes, where soil breathes
forth

Its earthen fragrance to the white grass stems,
Amid the shadows, there in the green shade.

I saw each minute cranny, and each stem
Lead downward to its root within the earth.
And there down near the soil the scent of earth,

The scent of what is deepest, I breathed it in.
And there the eye is closed. But in what sleep?
What roots did my hands touch? What earth was this?

Inner Life

And what is the intensity of life?
That pole beans twine the stake, that leaves stretch
wide,
Spreading their rivulets of lucent veins
Out toward the sun and even past the sun.

Inner compulsion burns the autumn leaf.
What is the grieved-for substance that I taste
In every breath of leaf-smoke in cold air
Or damp grass matted with the evening chill?

How many times removed, and then removed
Again from what we are? To stand and feel
As leaf-fall darkens round the twilight gaze.

I breathe the air that once was warm; my skin
Feels chill at evening; night dew slowly spreads.
The knowledge held inside me waits for me.

The Invisible Sea

You lay a long time with eyes closed, asleep
I thought, until my watching brought a grin.
And now we feel the dampness -- night's black rain.
The trees foam like a surf, the curtains flap.

Questioning me, you say you're "curious."
Get the dictionary for me, look it up.
I want to know the sources of this word,
Just so I'll know the sources of your thought,

The feelings that you have, or, if not that,
The silent, sensed activity beneath
The surface of your skin, your beauty's form.

That has a surface, as dark water does.
The night sea is an eye, its eyelid closed.
With what beneath? A sea of lidded eyes?

Late Hour

Darkness of evening violet, thunder clouds,
The tangle of the garden like black crepe
Hanging in ragged tatters, agitated
By the intermittent wind. The deep black trees.

Orange poppies nod above the ashen ground.
The yard is just a smudge of charcoal,
The path a smear of grey. Only the wind,
The leaves of the plum tree clatter in the wind.

How long since any of them came here last?
Yet who are they? The traces left don't tell.
The answer shuts its eye with the last light.

The world is very still and quiet now.
Black garden and black ground; the cindered tree.
Think of the days, that never can return.

Leaves, Events

The leaf is parched beneath the August sun
And then, dropped lightly from the tall bean plant,
The intricate curling tendrils and green vines
And white-pink flowers tangling in the heat,

It flutters down still, soil-scented air
And comes to rest upon the garden's floor
While overhead the August sun shines on
And pours its warmth and light intensely down.

I hear the hushed activity of day
Seeming to creep through every leaf and vine
And turning to a dense entangling web

Of growth, decay, these numberless events,
Such as the falling of the sun-parched leaf,
That point by point articulate the world.

Longing

Stranger to opening, the earth itself
Opens its secrets to the evening sun,
The breaking light-spokes touch along the field
That lies in stubble, shorn and darkening.

Though never ripe itself, the earth is filled
In filling the round apple, the corn's green stalk.
The black dirt path that opens up between
The two brown, matted fields of wild grass

Is leading us to where it will not say.
A crack along the surface of a cup
Will draw the hand's thumbnail to chip it more,

Effortless, unconscious, steadily.
Our hands reach out along the darkened hills,
They reach out far beyond the sunset's light.

Midsummer

The sun is hot today, the air is still
And fragrant in the garden's atmosphere,
The green tomatoes on the window sill
Are ripened in the sun and the open air.

Each leaf and every green vine and white flower
Takes in the light and heat of midday sun,
The day is hot and silent, heat whispers
The wakening stir of growth within each stem.

Take up a handful of the garden's earth
Still damp and cold despite the midday heat.
What is the dark empowerment that's there? --

The slow fulfillment of the springtime seed,
The flowers and green leaves beneath the sun,
The white pea blossoms burning in the light.

Morning

What do you say of man, moment by moment?
His rod between your teeth, his hair in flame,
Then falling with the day, his burnt-out form
An upright cinder walking the black earth.

From the root and from the vine then what can come?
Light opens in the blood behind my eyes
As breath is clenched then opened, opened outward,
Outward still more -- Come to me, light within!

The world lies open, weightless in my grasp....
The quaking luminous aura of the day --
Blue sky, darkly connected with my life.

Yet how? Blueness past the blue, so far, so far....
The calm cannot but fall. A limit set.
And yet I cannot help but wake once more.

Night in the Arbor

And on the stillness of the night air this,
The sweetest honeysuckle scent that drifts
And permeates the summer night, a thought
Disclosed within the arbor's darkest shadows.

What is the secret of the arbor now
When all the night is silent and the breeze
Has for so long not stirred the jasmine leaf
Nor lightly touched the roses on the wall?

The silence of the night is like a thought,
The almost unknown word upon your lips
You cannot speak, for you are it yourself.

A deeper silence gathers to a point
Within your heart, and, spoken in one word,
Becomes your surest knowledge, clear and true.

Night Garden

I've found this entrance to the night's garden,
Where I have crawled on hands and knees to touch
The damp leaves of the flowers with my tongue
Or part the midnight soil with my nose.

My eyes were level with the lowest vines
As through the night I studied the slow slug
And traced dark wisdom in its filmy track
Not figured in the clustering summer stars.

At times I let him crawl out on my hand
And leave behind his silken residue
From which I got the feeling, the deep sense,

Of everything that grows and lives and dies
By touch of flesh to flesh, by being flesh
Amid the realms of water, earth, and air.

Nightplace

What can be done to you? The wind blows through
Your clothing as you stagger and then fall.
The stars are small words dribbling from your mouth.
The night spins in your wide aphasic glance.

Here cannot be here. Snow drifts blow on
Like sand dunes over tall grass, fences, posts.
Lower and lower; night is hovering.
The world is all of this -- handfuls of snow.

The world is all of this. Therefore rejoice!
The snow blows on and on. There's nothing left.
Just something in these million crystals -- bright,

Not lost, not found, not counted, and not old.
The burial of snow; the age of night.
The dark of winter fields for miles and miles.

Opening to Outward

I lay there in the grass. I had come out
At midnight to the backyard just to see
What August's stars would look like seen against
The dark corona of the tall plum tree.

The grass touched at my ear, and looking up,
My head against its foot, I saw the trunk
Which curved up toward that region that was night
Where its weird umbel of green branches swayed

In the warm hypnotic breeze -- metallic dust
Of stars a cobalt blue night rain come down
Around the nodding branches over me.

The constellations turned and turned, the ground
Beneath me drifted slowly out among
The heavens, circling the earth's dark axis.

Origin

The leaves like paper rattling, dust-dry --
This and the blinded spirit in the ground,
His cries and cries; he tears to be released.
The hand that tears itself becomes the tear.

The rip is opened up between the legs;
The blood cannot but flow. The wound is eaten.
The famishing dilemma fixes one
Like a moth pulsing in the spider's clench.

The embers in the grate -- scattered, pin points --
Falling and falling over the burnt-out world,
The paper world, the ashen world, these stars --

The earth-rim opened to the depths of night,
Embers and silence fall around us here,
The earth the shadow that we sometimes feel.

The Other Realm

Another world beyond our world, listening
To empty speech like rustling dry leaves,
Like dry leaves burning or like paper burnt,
The paper of burning books and cities burned,

The world, the listening world beyond our own,
Where can it be? I know yet do not know.
I feel the earth around me as it drifts
And falls away, complete, a finished thing.

Now something else is rising in the night,
The darkness fills with possibilities.
What listens is not part of something more,

Structures encompassing a smaller one.
It lingers here beside us, shadow-like,
Called from a different sun, a different earth.

Portents

Green twilight and the purple-cindered clouds
Glow with red-ember scorings in late sun,
Smoke-like recessions open and flow and close.
The sky is deep blue in the east, storm tatters.

The wind is bright, at intervals sun-sparks
From blackened rooftops west. Dispersing clouds
Flow toward the blinding, setting sun; the sky
Is full of movement and dark flocks of birds.

Branches of the plum tree waver, carbonized
In dim red light that spaces burning roofs.
Black galls are on the branches; the cancered tree.

Now everything flows west. The wind makes all
The movement in the sky of light and clouds
Feel like part of a process here on earth.

Powers

That day the uncut field, the grass waist high,
Midsummer's grass with pollen in the light,
Its dust in drifting stillness in the air,
A silence in the heat all afternoon.

A clearness in the far air of the field,
The yellow sun, the clearest warmth of light,
Beneath, the sunlit grass in which the breeze
Would ripple slowly with its passing wave.

I lay there for a while and listened close:
I heard the sound of water, the small creek
That flowed along the roadside's low fenced edge:

The sound, the light, the light and water's flow,
The sound of water and the flow of light
Within, along the edges of the field.

Prospect, Mid-Winter

The sun is down below the far hill's edge.
Its last and distant light can scarcely glance
Through cold ice-mist that skirts the spruce-dark hill.
Cold blue of evening, breath-mist on the air.

The hills are amber and the last sun gone
Beneath green auras of the burnt-off trees.
The sky is changing, opening to the stars,
Evening purples and darkens the sun-void.

The shadows lengthen through the valley's cleft.
The ashes of snow fields are charred black,
The river a dim crease in charcoal dust.

The world is like a burnt coal going dead.
How total darkness takes the valley whole.
Where can our home be on the frozen earth?

Paths of Crystal

Enter the dream of darkness, as of light.
Just as the light dreamed once, darkness dreams too.
We are its shadows, our footsteps creak in snow.
The snow is full of hidden light. Blue dusk.

The cold blue light of snow shines inwardly
To each one walking here. Blood freezes still.
Yet thought continues without blood, ice blood.
The miracle of breath, unfrozen still.

"I" is collected in the wind; voices.
Blue dusk is full of eyes, the night more so.
The snow itself holds voices, memories,

Yet they're all gone now, although never gone.
Dark memories torment our steps. Yet bathe
Your face in snow, to freeze it and know light.

Recollection

Where has he gone, who climbed the twilight tree,
Among the violet shadows, the mauve-gathered light,
The clustering, black and ragged leaves afloat
Amid the dimness of the falling gold?

Then, at that moment, promises lay dead
And radiance withdrawn from the earth,
The purpling distended shadows bled
From garden bench and from the house's eaves.

Lie on the damp grass, let the night come on.
The flicker of the grass blade from your breath,
The tickling of the grass blade through your ear...

The coldness of the grass against your face...
The hardness of the ground against your cheek.
You feel the clouds still moving through dim light.

Reverdie

The spring's warm weather blows into my heart,
Opening pages as it agitates the leaves
(That show their countless eyes, their countless
mouths
Whispering secrets in the rained-on tree).

New movement crowds the pages of my book.
I raise my hand (which now seems strange to me)
Feeling the light upon the back of it.
The light is rich this afternoon, and warm,

Haunted with infinite depth, and yet still clear,
Empty perhaps yet radiant, streaming glare
Through cracking fissures of the maple's crown --

Openings from one book into another book,
Misstatements of beginning, where one ray
Pierces the side of one page through to the other side.

Searching through the Many-Leaved Night

The earth is listening beyond the night
For answering worlds arising in the dark
And stirring from its own forgotten life,
One earth of many worlds, that wake, that sleep,

An earth now listening beyond the world
That echoes with our voices and our steps.
Deep focus night, an eyeless pupil, clear
Of blind intentions and of images,

Now deepened by a single falling leaf,
A tiny scraping sound that scatters thought,
Here on the sidewalk, the world's unbroken crust.

I feel another life within the one we have,
Life always sought-for and yet never found,
Not greater but set just inside our own.

Season of Quiet

Season of quiet, of the falling leaf,
Enigma of the silent afternoon,
So still and blue; high sunlit golden leaves
Are aured in the sun from which they fall.

And sunlight filters, searches through the tree
In bright rays and in dusty slanted beams:
Light echoing in laden, golden boughs
Like whispers whispered in a silent church.

Our silent speech, our speech of many leaves,
Has fallen underneath our feet, become
The papery surface that we walk upon,

The thing of which the dreamt-of earth is made.
What is the season of quiet speaking now,
Here in the other world quite set apart?

September Afternoon

Mid-afternoon. The field in September
Humming softly, filling its own silence,
Is filled with sunlight. Emptiness is filled
With warm sun and with small white butterflies.

I stand in waist-high grass. It sways and sifts
Around me almost audibly, opening;
I walk through and it crackles under foot
Then rises back up slowly where I've passed.

The field opening: a circle spreads
With ripples rippling as my wake fades out.
I crouch down low, the same height as the grass,

And listen where the afternoon burns low,
Embers simmering around me, and the day
Is warm and still, and stiff grass taps my cheek.

Shapes of Light

I sat in the arbor, resting, almost asleep,
My eyes half closed upon the shade the sun
Flaked through -- its light mote-spinning, checkering
The grass and picnic table and the chairs.

The leaves and lattice broke the glare in shapes --
A papery rustling plane of shadows
With streaks of molten sun behind, within,
Blazing figures there -- stem and leaf auras,

A burning depth beyond shadow, or woven
In the patterns of the vines and leaves,
Or merely apparent in that latticed area,

That realm of space, enclosed, not very deep,
Yet deep enough to draw the eye, the mind,
Seeking out substance and finding shards of light.

Snowbed

The snow falls through the night, the night through
time.

I lie here in the snow, pinned like a moth
Between the two wings that I made myself.
Snow falls. Or is it I that drift upward,

Falling toward the sky, through space and time?
My ears sting numbly in the freezing snow.
I spread my arms out wider still to hold
The emptiness of white that fills the sky,

That covers up the ground, that falls to earth
And covers me, a stranger fallen here.
My two spread wings are like an hour glass too,

And I the narrow waist where white sand falls.
I am the sand that falls, the snow that falls.
What will be left when all the sand runs through?

Snowpath

Darkness before the face: the eye must search.
The hand can only touch what can't be held,
The step can only tread what flows away
From underneath the foot. We fall and fall

Like someone climbing up a hill of grain,
The millet grains of time that open up
Beneath the foot while closing overhead.
Time is the depth of night -- so on-and-on,

Far toward the frozen black of winter sky,
Or down beneath your foot, shrunk tinily
Within the interlocking cells of snow.

Snow is my metaphor for time that falls
And covers us and which we cannot touch
Since, at our freezing dying touch, it melts.

Snow Valley

Fields of bright snow along the valley's floor --
The river frozen in its banks of light
Creases the glitter of white distances,
A living unhealed fissure, a faint scar.

The valley holds all sunlight in itself.
Dazzling sun-fields to the east and west
Won't bear to be looked at; cold radiance
Aching in the eye that tears and blurs.

The sun hangs over the abyss of light.
Below the hand's edge shielding my eyes
It seems a relatively small white disc.

The sky is absolutely clear and blue.
The river valley burns like phosphorous
With glowing sun-mist and bright smoky light.

Sound, Light and Time

Murmuring in the flowers of the peas
The bees will hover in the tangled vines,
Attracted by the white pea blossoms' scent
That comes out all the more in day's warm light.

At noon within the arbor, flowered vines
Of honeysuckle and grape leaves catch the sun
That makes a dappled sparkling in the leaves --
All day the bees inhabiting that light,

All afternoon inhabiting the sun
That shines down with its bright transparent warmth;
The midday's sunlight, the vine's white flowers,

Both burn together the long afternoon.
The bees take in the warmth, move in that radiance.
The gardener hears them when he comes at noon.

Spring

This is the start of spring shoots from the rain,
The arching bean sprout, carrot stems light green,
The onion put forth newly from the dirt,
The scented basil leaf, the pepper plant,

The squash with yellow flowers and broad leaves
That catch the rain in droplets running down,
Tomatoes with their still-green buds of fruit,
The plum branch with its delicate white flower;

The foam-white flowers of the berry canes
That bunch in thick sprays swaying in the breeze,
The white-pink blossoms of the peas just come,

The tangled pole bean vines, their broad green leaves
In which the bees will hover hunting flowers,
The sun that shines down the whole afternoon.

Summer

The time has come when berries ripened black
Are full upon their stems and pendulous
And lolling woozily with every breeze
That touches them and touches their green leaves.

They're of the time that sleeping in its heat
And in its mystery of fruitfulness
Dreams through its dark and intricate network
Of buried roots and marrow of green stems,

Brings forth its many flowers to the sun,
The fruit in which the heat of summer runs
And into which the heat of summer flows,

Bringing its seasonal eternal life,
And turning peach to peach and plum to plum
As well as all the garden to the fall.

The Spring Beneath the Surface of the Spring

The dew's still on the grass, the air is damp,
A cool night mist still lingers on each leaf.
Things are in their twilight, not yet the sun --
The garden has not felt the touch of day.

The moisture settles, beads on every leaf,
Each stem, each blade of grass is wet with it,
As though emerged just now, grown separate
From something in the night, or from the mist.

Out of the mist, emerging from the night
And dim shining dew, the vines and leaves
Are wet and new as though just now come forth

From that which is the darker principle,
The flowing stream, the hidden spring of mist
That lies beneath the surface of the earth.

Thaw in Earliest Spring

Here is the branch I've broken from the tree
And this the ice that's heavy crusted on
With glassy crystals dripping in the sun
And water droplets running down my wrist.

And in each drop the bright sun glints and shines
And warms the frozen fibers of the branch,
Making them bend and supple with new blood
That runs beneath the ice until it thaws.

The warmth that flushes through the deepest grain
And fills the inner fibers with new life
From which the blossoms flower in their time

Moves also through the blood with its new pulse
And grows into a warming of the heart
Bringing the driest sticks to bear their flower.

Those Waiting

Gold and copper clouds, bright amber tints
Across the rain-damp and acid-green lawn.
The tree limbs blacken in declining light,
The marigolds are rust; spider-shadow trees.

The one who cannot speak and cannot know
Watches the end of light; the evening wind
Moves every leaf and tendril of the garden,
Which ripples, and the garden aches for light.

But we, who cannot speak, don't want the light,
Who neither speak nor hear, who never know
The world as it is given to the eye

But taste and grieve it, aching, its scent, its life --
Of wood grain, rotting wood, the wet soft grass.
Branches are cinders now and damply burn.

Threshold

The letters of the world are lost beyond recall
Inside the darkness of the setting sun.
Beyond the chary lid of the black hill,
Where many trees are burnt to thin match sticks,

The sun itself drops like a small tablet
Quickly dissolving in the glass of night.
The effervescence of its yellow green
Is still seen, though – long, silent echoing.

Night of the word: dark rumors in the wind.
And, slightly louder, too, the rustling sound
Of papers underneath an old man's head.

Night of the world: I hear the silences,
The voices of the tortured, the drip of blood,
The rustle of silk scarves and currency.

Time and Place

The day is hot and still this afternoon,
There is no breeze, just quiet in the field
That lies beneath the yellow sun's clear light
And where no stem, no leaf, no grass can stir.

And time is silenced, silence is the time
That does come to pass but simply is.
The day is one transparent realm of light
And, somewhere in the silence, the cicada's sound:

A humming in the wide hush of the field,
The sound of heat, the sound of noon itself,
Heard in the total stillness of the day.

And one hears something present in the day
And found within the light, within the field,
Within each stem, each leaf, each blade of grass.

To You

Come to the garden, breathe the damp night air
In which are scents of wet earth and wet grass.
Now break a plum branch from the dewed plum
tree...

Yes, it too has its scent of the rainy night.

Split the plum and let its dark juice flow
Until it drips down chin and hand. The tongue
Must taste it all -- what else can it do?
The night and grass, the night and the rain and wind.

And now the garden shivers rustling around you
As you stand and breathe the air, the hour's lateness,
Breathing it in a sense more deep than breath.

We are surrounded by the garden's world.
You take it in and cannot get away from it.
You cannot get away from that one scent.

Traces, Paths

The shadows of the trees darken and reach
And crumble the cracked sidewalk in their web.
Vein-shadows of tree limbs, blood-sparks of light
With, here and there, a beam of iodine

Through charring and massed embers; the green
west --
Hills grow more distant, light is opening,
Space is a burnt out ruin, earth-light grows dark,
The earth turns, falling down through empty space.

Our steps make only dark paths on its surface.
These -- in the silence spoken by the sun
That hushes the world, blowing daylight out --

I feel as drumming rain through realms of leaves,
As echoes through the ground. Twilight grows still.
Yet a word thought in the silence echoes far.

Twilight Arbor

This quiet of the summer's garden -- now
Evening air deepens as the sun goes down.
The shadows lengthen steeply on the grass,
The air is cooler with darkness coming in.

The yellow roses in the evening's light
Are rustled just a little by the breeze
That brings the scent of flowers and damp earth
To where I sit here watching, listening.

I hear the humming of the twilight beetle.
Some bees have stayed on from the midday heat;
They buzz and glint among the flowering peas

Or hover near the roses on the wall.
And one can almost hear the moths now out:
Their faintest sounds the sounds of coming night.

Two

Come out to meet me at the garden's edge.
Some sprigs of mint I have still wet with rain
That shaken out leave droplets on the hand.
The scent of dampened earth now rises up

As I break off a small sprig with its leaves.
Each leaf is three plied, branching through the night.
Dew glistens tinily like hidden stars.
The dark is opening to more than dark.

This is the place, this arbor, and the time,
The time when night is still and close, the scent
Of honeysuckle in the midnight breeze,

When breath elicits the response of breath,
Desire of desire, touch of touch,
When all is given that fulfills this night.

Under the Spring

Take up a handful of the garden's earth --
The sun's come back with mild breeze, and the rain
Soaks and penetrates the crumbling ground,
Bringing forth new complexities of growth.

The tentative strong stirring in the roots
Conceives the dense involvement, the new life
Which moves a presence latent in each part,
Expressed in each, and gathering in all.

What is it in the root and stem and leaf?
Impalpable flux accumulating form
And bringing to fulfillment that which is

And still must be, the unarrestable
Current lying hidden in plain sight,
Within the marrow, on the surface, always now.

Valley Edge, Winter

The sun is high above the new snow fields.
The white hills burn and throb in the bright day.
My breath is dry-ice vapor and the sky
Is absolutely empty, a clear pale blue.

There's hardly any wind, no sound at all,
No passing cars; the highway opposite,
Along the valley's slope, is like a strip
Of zinc or silver, shining in the sun.

Near in the topmost boughs of the fir tree,
A filmy slip-stream glitter of sun-snow
Veils and eddies, blown away into the air.

Along the valley's frozen floor, the gray
Congealed wax, the river's skin of ice,
Sparkles with tufts and white rosettes of snow.

Waking in the Sun

I lay with eyes half closed to the hot sun
Holding its quivering light inside my lashes.
I dreamed a dim sound, perhaps the wind,
somewhere,
And woke to find a breeze sifting tall grass.

It fluctuated odors settled there
Through afternoon's hot silence. A still haze
Hummed so loudly as I woke; the sky,
So hotly blue, had three white cumuli.

I'd dreamed myself dead perhaps, forgotten, lost.
To the world, yet this is really just the dream
The soul makes in its longing troubled sleep,

A dream of separation at an end.
I woke to find myself in the bright world,
My face burned by the sun, my head spinning.

Walking through the Dark

Passages always waiting for my step --
 Gateways through the overhanging leaflets
 Of October's midnight trees: green moonlight
 And zebra shadow stripes of darkness.

I walk from frame to frame -- each sidewalk crack --
And sense the strange blank spots in the film
(Which all flash by so dazzlingly fast)
Must hold the deep reality one feels

In glimpses of sudden clarity, or dreams.
Yet how can you approach it, here and now?
Where shadow-doors from shadow-scrimmed tree
boughs

Are woven things, textiles of light and dark,
To touch perhaps, yet not to press beyond,
And so much more like things to be tangled in.

Water

The waters of the night move through the mind
And dim the eye which closes up in sleep
Drowning in its own depths, the deepest well
Of all and dark with its original night.

The mere self cannot budge out of its realm
Despite the alchemy and charm of dreams,
Although I must turn over now and drift
In the moonlight vortex of sleep's water spun

Around the bubble of the mind, within
The nutshell of the skull and in the walnut
Convolutions of the brain dry as a nut.

And yet maybe the sleepers will join hands --
The ghostly morris in that hidden world,
Covered by moonlight, moving through every mind.

Wet Morning

This morning on the garden's path the vines
Were beaded by a vague pearl mist of rain
That sparkled on the flower's and broad leaves
And lightly wet the walker as he passed --

The green vines weighted with the cool water,
And down the middle of each leaf a furrow
For the rain that runnels into drops
And drips down from each leaf to a lower leaf.

The mist upon the garden, its black soil
Made blacker with the wet, crumbling in the hand,
As an earthy scent of dampness rises up.

And with all this the sound of dripping leaves
That breathe the garden's damp. And there you stand
And breathe in every breath as deep as life.

In the White Field

Immediate and silent, frozen still,
The night has no beginning and no end;
The winter stars, at the edge of present time,
Fall every instant farther and farther

Out of reach -- my single outstretched hand....
The past must fall away from us,
The wakeful present vaporizing away
As less than breath, as less than present time.

Nearly the fabled life again, and then
Not quite, again. The moment, older now,
Is frozen till it cracks. The night is wide,

Silent where a field of moonlight and white snow
Is like the bare board of a mirror's face,
Imageless and not to be broken through.

Winter

The burning of white snow, bright blinding ground
Reflecting the icy glories of midday
And doubling them with its own light, auras
Of sunlight from the lightly covered earth

Augmenting light with echoes, echoing
Its instantaneous presence, silent
Fury, its illimitable glory,
Its intangible and yet visible power --

The turning of the light to more than light,
A power of the scarred and barren earth
Numbed in the anesthesia of the cold --

Is it an end or is it a beginning,
The snow's light, sheer and unapproachable?
Where is it from? What could come after it?

Words to Silence

Like leaf veins there are veins of light that flow
Toward me, to me, becoming me -- my thought
Can never trace the root of thought's response
Nor any tongue the baffled root of speech.

But in the veins of light and arteries
Of darkness, the darkness bleeding through
The quickening mesh of captivating light,
I sense and feel and want, yet do not know.

I do not need to know and yet still need.
Dark bleeds through the brightness of the web,
Flowing as substance outward into light,

Flowering in my many flowers of speech.
And then returns, as leaves into the ground,
As blood into the heart, as words to silence.

AFTERWORD

Encounters With the Author in Taipei

We first made the author's acquaintance at a well-known restaurant in Taipei, the Wysteria Tea House, famous as having been a meeting place for dissident intellectuals in the years of political struggle in Taiwan .

During the recent effort to publish his rather extensive work, we had occasion to discuss aspects of his past and current writing.

Your poetry is quite varied in style and in form. Where do you locate yourself in the overall debate concerning poetic form?

I consider myself an eclectic. The main thing for me is to grasp, mentally, a certain object -- that is, an experience, a scene, an event -- to see it and feel it. Any language that seems to convey the reality of that is good, any which remains merely language, merely words, is for me of no interest, in some cases it is actively negative, in the sense of being obstructive.

A cliché?

Yes or not even a cliché but in a way worse than that. Much of our language obscures the nature of reality. Words in

themselves are, in a sense, the enemy of writing. I tell students that all the time. Words most often merely convey the usual accepted social understanding. Writing is for the purpose of grasping reality itself, which is always something other than the social understanding.

Do you consider yourself a political writer?

All writing is political in the sense of attempting to correct these false social understandings. At times its purpose is to merely reveal with a new freshness, a perceptual freshness, as it were. But even this itself has a certain basic political significance, in the sense that awakened human beings will act and think differently than those who are at rest in the normal tranquilized non-perception that we usually are caught up in.

Does living outside the United States help or hinder your writing?

I think it helps, in general. It is in some ways a very undeveloped culture, yet in other ways it is overbearing. (The US, that is.) There is, for example, a great deal of rather stifling political correctness, as it's called, and to get away from that is itself a positive thing. For a while I had no idea how I would ever get all this material published, especially if you're not there trying to do all the "networking" that is needed, and which I was absolutely terrible at anyway -- worse than terrible, I really had no clue, I still don't, I suppose. And then it came about that you could just do it all by yourself, by means of the internet.

How much material is it? It's quite a lot, it would seem.

Yes, I guess it's about 40 volumes or so. Over 2,000 pages,

if you want to measure it like that. I don't know how much it would weigh.

There seem to be many styles represented. Was that something you consciously strove for?

Yes. I always wanted to be able to represent a wide variety of experiences. My first models for the artist were people such as Picasso, Goethe, Bach -- artists who could work in a very wide range of forms and even use widely different styles. Of course, I can't compare myself to people like that, but it was still a goal, to try many types of things.

What sorts of things are you working on currently?

Well as you know I am trying to get all this existing work published, going through it, touching it up here and there, proofreading, and so forth. After that, I think I might return to some translating work -- Holderlin especially, and some Chinese poets, but don't ask me which ones.

All right, but can you say whether they are modern or classical?

Classical. My favorite is Mung Hao-Ren, actually.

There are many other things to talk about, but perhaps that's a good note to end on for now.

But what were you trying to do in these poems in particular?

I don't know how to answer that. I would just say that I think the reader will notice echoes of Wallace Stevens, Keats, Shakespeare, and others.

Anything further?

No. But I think they're rather straight forward pieces, mostly, not entirely. There is an ongoing question for me -- what can you make out of very traditional material and approaches?

About the Author

Steven Frattali is an expatriate American writer living in Taipei. He is the author to date of over 40 volumes of poetry, totaling over 2,000 pages of work. He is also the author of several critical works, among them *Person, Place and World: A Late Modern Reading of Robert Frost* and *Hypodermic Light: The Poetry of Philip Lamantia and the Question of Surrealism*.

About the Banyan Press of Taipei

The Banyan Press of Taipei was founded in 2008 by Samuel Palmer and Steven Frattali. It plans to publish the work of expatriate Anglophone writers of the Pacific Rim who are working outside the norms of mainstream publishing. The Press does not at this time invite submissions, but it hopes to do so in the future.